

Essays and Contributions.

"ABIDE IN ME."

BY C. H. BALSBAUGH.

My Dear Sister: Your very sorrowful yet buoyant letter is here. Christ was a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and yet had a super-abundance of joy to share with others. Isa. liii: 3. John xv, 11. God is dealing wonderfully with you, leading you from one fiery furnace into another still hotter yet keeping your hope at noontide lustre that all your troubles and afflictions will issue in eternal joy. Your experience is a mystery to me, but not more than my own. But God knows the "need be" of every individual life, and He knows how to mould our trials and perplexities into His glorious purpose. You may rest assured that if God permits 1 Peter i, 6, to characterize your life, He will not fail to bring you unto the full realization of verse 7. God makes no mistakes, and He knows how to turn our mistakes into means of sanctification. Take Hebrews xii, 10, 11. and make it the web and woof of your being. You are in an intense crucible now, and the smelting is severe and you must not allow human considerations to direct you from the ultimate purpose of God. It took great sins and outrageous malice and deception to bring Joseph where God wanted him; but the sublime and gracious end of God was accomplished, not only in spite of, but by means of, the combined machinations of devils and wicked men. And so in hundreds of Bible records. The God of Moses, the God of Joseph, the God of David, the God of Daniel, the God of Paul, is *your* God, and will as certainly fulfill Rom. viii, 28 in you as He fulfilled Luke xxiv, 26, in His own Son.

It is pitiful indeed how shy we are to make acquaintance with Jesus in the only way He can be known unto salvation. See how boldly faith can pray for the consummation of experiences which put every nerve and sensibility of body and soul to the rack of Golgotha. Philpp. iii, 8, 9, 10, especially the 10th verse. It is simply heartrending to see how the majority of professing Christians are trying some how to slip herein without submitting to the cru-

cial test of "the author of salvation." "If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. ii, 11, 12. Can terms be plainer? To be baptized is no criterion: but to *be* what this Divine symbol represents, is the very heart of Christianity. To be baptized into the natural element is a graphic token of regeneration and loyalty; but to be baptised *into* CHRIST'S DEATH is *the reality itself*. God is only verifying in your consciousness the grandeur of the transcendent fact which you externally testified in your baptism. How sad to witness the falshood into which baptism is often converted in the lives of professed disciples of Jesus. When the solemn fact of death with Christ is to be tested, what repulsive caricature many prove to be. They are any thing but dead. The "old man" is kicking and struggling and protesting in every fibre. The clergy are no exception. There is many a Haman in the pulpit who is secretly erecting a gallows for the execution of some humble, inflexibly loyal Mordecai. Esther v, 14. The essence of the Gospel is Life through Jesus Christ by the process of Gal. ii, 20. It is not simply making up one's mind to lead a better life, having Jesus Christ as the Model for our imitation. This is Professor's Drummond's Gospel, and an utterly futile thing it is. The most exact and persistent copying of Jesus' will not save us. Nothing short of Divine immanence will answer. The children of Israel had to be redeemed by blood, and had to eat the passover before they could step over the threshold of their homes toward the red sea and the land of promise. The blood is the Life, and Christ must be our Bread, and we cannot go one step Heavenward till these verities become matters of consciousness, but of this divine inbeing comes all the power or acceptable obedience. This is what enables us to use the triumphant language of 2 Cor. xii, 9, 10.

Your trials are peculiar, and nothing but omnipotent grace can sustain you. "Christ in you the hope of glory," can make your fiery furnace the very vestibule of Heaven. What did Joseph know when he lay in the pit, or in the Egyptian dungeon what particular

destiny God had in reserve for him; what he knew was the absolute righteousness of God, and his own perfect trust in the Divine faithfulness. This kept him in perfect peace, and it will keep you. See the beautiful Gospel glimpse in Isa. xxvi, 3, 4. Remember the situation of Israel at Pi-bahiroth. Ex. xiv, 1, 2. Can your dilemma be more humanly hopeless? Let your soul feast on verse 14. The host of Pharaoh nor the host of Beelzebub can prevail against you. Rom. viii, 33, 34, shut the mouth of earth and hell. Study the Psalm which the unspiritual mind cares least of all to read. Connect the goodness and mercy of God with every separate event of your life. See Psa. cxxxvi. Those repetitions, instead of being wearisome, are the very jubilate of the trusting, grateful soul. Deal with God in Christ as immediately as a babe deals with its mother's breast. Make a daily song out of Philpp. i, 20, 21. And do not fail to put in 2 Cor. ii, 14, as the clear ringing treble of your midnight melody. Can it be done? Yes, verily. See Philpp. iv, 13, and 2 Cor. ix, 8. Wonderful Jesus! Only there remains in us too much of 2 Cor. iii, 15. Day and night, moment by moment, stand before the Divine Mirror of 2 Cor. iii, 18. Then 2 Cor. iv, 17. Then 1 Pet. i, 8. Then Rev. xix, 6. Then, forever and ever. John xvii, 24.

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WHAT NATIONAL CONFERENCE SHOULD AND SHOULD NOT DO.

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Many good suggestions have been made by our brethren in the (best of papers) the EVANGELIST, yet a word from one who does not wish to dictate may be of benefit.

In as much as creeds and catechisms have been the source of divisions and strife, National Conference should be careful not to adopt creed or confession of faith.

The Bible alone doctrine ought to be good enough for the Brethren church. If it is not why did Paul say to Timothy, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly